

Story #203

Narrator: Filiz Kiygı
Location: Ankara, but informant
 was native of Istanbul
Date: May 1962

Just Say Hiç [variant of #156]

This man had a very dumb servant, and he sent him to buy some salt. In town they called salt hiç (meaning none, or nothing, also).

So being a dumb man, the servant had to keep repeating it as he went to market. "Hiç, hiç, hiç, hiç," he kept saying.

Suddenly he saw a man pulling a (fishing) line. He stood there watching the man pulling the line, at the same time repeating, "Hiç, hiç, hiç, hiç," so he wouldn't forget.

When he kept saying, "Hiç, hiç, hiç, hiç," and the man continued to have nothing on the line the man got mad and he said, "Well, you don't say that!"

Poor boy asked, "Well, what do I say?"

He said, "Well, just say, 'Five or ten together'" [wishing him luck]

So the servant thought, "Well, that was what I was supposed to say. So he went on saying, "Five or ten together. Five or ten together. May there be five or ten together," just repeating in order not to forget what he was

Suddenly he met a funeral procession. He stood aside, but kept repeat-

"May there be five or ten together. May there be five or ten together."

One man out of the crowd heard him and said, "Boy, you don't say that!"

The poor boy was puzzled. He said, "Well, what do I say, then?"

And the man said, "May God bless his soul! May God bless his soul!"

So the servant started to repeat, in order not to forget, "May God bless his soul! May God bless his soul!"

Well, he was still repeating, "May God bless his soul! May God bless his soul!" Suddenly he passed a dead dog, and he was still repeating, God bless his soul. May God bless his soul!"

Man heard him and said, "Boy, are you crazy? You don't say that!"

And the poor boy said, "Well, what do I say?"

And the man said, "You just say, 'Ugh! It smells bad! Ugh! It smells terrible!'

So the servant started to repeat the new sentence, so he wouldn't forget it. "Ugh! It smells bad! Ugh! It smells terrible!"

Then he saw some ladies just coming out of a ^{Bath, public} Turkish bath, clean as whistles. And he passed these ladies. He was still repeating, "Ugh! It smells bad! Ugh! It smells terrible!"

Well, the ladies threw some stones at him and they shouted at him, could you say that?"

And he asked, "Well, what do I say, then?"

"Gee, how nice! Oh, how nice!" they answered.

Well, he started to repeat this sentence. He was still repeating it when he came across two men, fighting. He stood to watch the fighting. every time one of the men got a beating, he said, "Gee, how nice! Oh, how nice!"

When they heard him say that, they stopped the fight and they gave him a good, stout blow. "You don't say that!" they said.

He was shocked. "What should I say, then?" he asked

They said, "Well, you try to stop the fight by saying, 'Don't do that, gentlemen! Don't fight, please!'"

So he started to repeat this new sentence now, as he walked close to the marketplace. But right then he saw two dogs fighting, and when he repeated the same sentence while watching the dogs, a man stopped him and said, you crazy? You don't say that!"

"Well, what do I say?" he asked.

"Well, you just say, 'Get out, dog! Get away, dog!'" the man answered

So he began to repeat this new sentence as he came to the market first store he saw was the shoe-repair shop, and the man had a piece of leather in his mouth stretching it to fit into a certain pattern. And the boy as he was watching him repeated, "Get out, dog! Get away, dog!"

The shoe-repair man became very angry. He said, "The dog is yourself! You don't say that!"

And the poor boy said, "Please don't be angry with me! What do I say then?"

And he said, "Well, you say nothing [hiç]!"

"Oh," said the servant. "That's what I was going to buy--nothing [hiç]." And he went in and bought the salt.